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FutureHeights
2843 Washington Blvd. #105
Cleveland Heights, OH 44118

'Community of activists' supports Haitian asylum seeker

Shari Nacson

Ansly Damus recounts his migration journey and quest for asylum with warmth, with gentle humor. The former electrical engineer and professor charms with his radiant smile, intellect, and storytelling. Periodically, he checks his phone because it is his sole connection with his family back in Haiti. It's hard to picture him sitting in a county jail for two years without sunlight.

Damus would still be in the dark without the untiring efforts of the ACLU, his immigration attorney, and an involved Cleveland Heights community that includes an immigration activist, an empty-nest couple, and families who have provided friendship and support.

Damus crossed the Mexican border into the U.S. in October 2016 after a two-year trek that took him from Ecuador to Brazil and through Central America. His border crossing was an asylum request, which meant immediate detention. He fled Haiti because he openly criticized a powerful local politician, whose followers then threatened and attacked him. He left behind a wife,



Haitian asylum-seeker Ansly Damus (center) with his American sponsors, Heights residents Melody Hart and Gary Benjamin. Damus was released from custody after the ACLU won a landmark case against the federal government.

a 4-year-old daughter and an infant son.

Most U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detainees are housed at federal prisons, but some stay at approved jails, which lack prison resources. ICE moved Damus from Arizona, where he had entered the U.S., to Ohio. He spent two years in Chardon's Geauga County jail—which has no outdoor area for detainees—while his attorney, Elizabeth Ford, and the ACLU fought on his behalf.

Heights resident Anne Hill, an immigration-rights activist, knew Ford

through sanctuary movement work at Forest Hill Church. Hill organized visitors to provide moral support for Damus.

In January 2018, when it became clear having a sponsor to host Damus would aid in his release, Hill began reaching out to people. A compassionate couple of empty nesters, Melody Hart and Gary Benjamin, agreed to become his sponsors.

For months they visited Damus, developing a friendship that helped him through his detention and court process.

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Reaching Musical Heights concert returns to Severance Hall on March 5



French horn players from Heights High perform in the Reaching Musical Heights concert at Severance Hall in 2011.

Krista Hawthorne

The Reaching Musical Heights concert will fill Severance Hall on Tuesday, March 5, starting at 7:30 p.m. More than 550 student musicians from grades 3 through 12 will perform

vocal and instrumental pieces for an adoring audience.

"This remarkable event is amazing to see and hear, even if you are not a family member or friend of a performer," said Susie Kaeser, former executive director of Reaching Heights. "It is an inspirational community celebration of excellent music education in the CH-UH public schools."

Every four years since 2003, Reaching Heights, a small nonprofit that connects the community to the CH-UH public schools, coordinates this formal event in partnership with the school district. The elementary students will lift their voices as one large choir. Next, the Heights Middle School choir, band, and strings will perform. Then the high school will showcase Singers,

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Marotta's to close for renovations



Marotta's general manager, Alexandra Quinn, with her uncle, the restaurant's owner, Brian Linihan, visiting an Italian winery.

Shari Nacson

Staying true to Brian and Alicia Linihan's original vision and taste, Marotta's, the Lee Road landmark, will close Feb. 3 for an estimated six-week renovation that promises to retain the warmth and charm that customers have always loved. According to the restaurant's general manager—and the owners' niece—Alexandra Quinn, customers can expect a gentle facelift that will include updated tables, chairs, paint and light fixtures.

"Brian wanted to add a room for private wine dinners," said Quinn.

Changes will include an expanded offering of wines and cocktails. While the menu will stay the same, customers will notice more aperitifs, staff guidance with the all-Italian wine list, plus encourage-

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Heights BOE to appoint interim superintendent

Scott Wortman

The search for the next superintendent of the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District is in full swing. The CH-UH Board of Education (BOE) began the process in November, and expects to interview finalists in February, with the goal of naming its new superintendent by March.

The BOE will name an interim superintendent to lead the district beginning in March, when the current superintendent, Talisa Dixon,

leaves for Columbus City Schools. The new permanent superintendent is expected to begin work in CH-UH in the summer of 2019.

[Editor's note: On Sept. 21, when the CH-UH City School District and Dixon announced her decision to take the position of Superintendent of Columbus City Schools, she "affirmed her commitment to complete the 2018-19 school year with the CH-UH district, citing the need to 'finish important work' and 'see through our initiatives.'"

Asked on Jan. 8 about the change

in Dixon's time frame for leaving CH-UH, Wortman stated: "She is in CH-UH through the end of February. This timeline was covered in the announcement of her contract agreement with Columbus on Nov. 10. Here is the link to our announcement/statement: www.chuh.org/protected/ArticleView.aspx?iid=6GI2G2B&dasi=3Y2I."

The statement reads in part: "Current Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District

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Letters Policy

The *Heights Observer* welcomes letters to the editor. They must be submitted electronically, along with the writer's name, phone number and e-mail address, to: www.heightsobserver.org/members.

HEIGHTS OBSERVER

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When Heights residents support our local businesses, we all win



OPENING THE OBSERVER

Deanna Bremer Fisher

We've been celebrating the first 10 years of publishing the *Heights Observer* by looking back—one month at a time—at headlines for that month that we've published over the past decade.

As I look back at a decade of Februaries, I'm struck by how many of the local businesses that were the subject of *Heights Observer* stories are no longer operating. Here are a few that you may remember: La Tea Dolly, Heights Guitars, Rockefeller's Heights Floral Shoppe, Big Dog Theater, A Phiner Bistro, Katz Club Diner.

We've all heard that small businesses have a high risk of failure. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics: 20 percent of small businesses fail in their first year, 30 percent in their second year, 50 percent in their fifth year,

and 70 percent in their 10th year.

It shouldn't be surprising, then, that many of those businesses that have appeared in these pages over the last decade are no longer here. (And the cold winter months are often the time when business owners make decisions to expand, maintain or close up shop.)

Whether you remember them or not, each business had a unique character that added something to the quality of life in the Heights. In surveys that FutureHeights has conducted over the years, respondents consistently note that being able to walk to a diverse mix of local businesses is one of the things they most appreciate about living in the Heights.

And, those small businesses that have withstood the test of time must be doing something right. The top headline for the February 2015 issue of the *Heights Observer* noted Nighttown's 50th anniversary, and another story in that issue called out Stone Oven's 20 years on Lee Road.

If you agree that unique local businesses are essential to our quality of life in the Heights, help us recognize them by casting your

vote for your favorites in the FutureHeights 2019 Best of the Heights Awards contest.

Which is this year's Best New Restaurant or Bar? What business exemplifies the Best Heights Vibe?

Cast your votes using the ballot on page 24 of this issue, or vote online at www.futureheights.org.

Need to do a little research before you vote? By all means, make a point to visit some of Cleveland Heights' and University Heights' restaurants and shops this month before you cast your ballot.

Voting closes on Feb. 15. Winners will be announced in the March issue of the *Heights Observer*. But in the end, we all win as we support our local entrepreneurs and celebrate the uniqueness that is the Heights.

Deanna Bremer Fisher is executive director of FutureHeights and publisher of the Heights Observer. To commemorate the 10-year anniversary of the Heights Observer, we are taking a look back at stories that appeared in these pages from 2008 through 2017.

About the Observer

The *Heights Observer* is not an ordinary newspaper; it is a nonprofit publication for residents of Cleveland Heights and University Heights.

The *Observer* has no writing staff; it is written by you—the readers.

Individuals throughout the community decide what stories they want to write, then submit them for publication. Anyone in University Heights or Cleveland Heights is welcome to contribute regularly, occasionally or even just once.

Is there something you think should be covered in the *Heights Observer*? If so, please write it on your own, or with friends, neighbors or colleagues. Our volunteer editors will make sure it's ready to publish and contact you with any questions.

If you're writing a news article, it should be clear and factual. If you want to express an opinion, submit it as a letter to the editor or an opinion piece. Either way, make sure it's about something specific to our two cities.

- To make a submission of any kind, go to www.heightsobserver.org and click on "Member Center" at the left.
- For information about writing style, article length, etc., click on "Become an *Observer*" at the left. For questions that aren't answered there, call the FutureHeights office at 216-320-1423 or e-mail info@futureheights.org.

Articles to be considered for the March issue must be submitted by Feb. 11. We publish some articles online as they come in—and still consider them for the next print issue. We also publish an e-newsletter each Tuesday.

CH's tolerance of deteriorated properties is misguided

To the Editor:

The survey results from the Cleveland Heights Branding Initiative bring to mind the adage that "your greatest strength begets your greatest weakness." The survey found that diversity is the city's most valued characteristic, and that the most cherished traits are openness, welcoming, inclusive and tolerance.

Those qualities are indeed city strengths. But the weakness comes about when they are applied inappropriately and result in community harm. I'm speaking of the civil version of "Love the sinner; hate the sin." Yes, be open, welcoming, inclusive and tolerant of people as people—but not of behavior, particularly as it affects the condition of homes and apartments. Cleveland Heights (led by City Hall) has for decades been overly tolerant of behavior that has resulted in deterioration, shoddy repairs, and seriously unattractive streets. That is the root cause of all the city's current challenges.

What started 50 years ago as a minor and correctable situation was allowed to grow into a community-threatening condition. Thousands of properties are in poor condition, many owed by people who can hardly afford to make them look

decent, let alone upgrade them. A new "brand" for the city cannot change that. It's up to City Hall to end the era of misguided tolerance. The heart of the matter is property standards and code enforcement. If that is not made the dominant—the dominant—issue in City Hall, there will be no reason to expect a future of anything other than more-of-the-same.

Tom Bier
Cleveland Heights

FutureHeights urges CH ABR to 'conceptually approve' TOH

To the Editor:

The FutureHeights Board of Directors sent this letter to the Cleveland Heights Architectural Board of Review on Dec. 19:

Dear Members of CH Architectural Board of Review,

FutureHeights supports moving forward with a mixed-use development at Top of the Hill (TOH) and urges the Cleveland Heights Architectural Board of Review to "conceptually approve" the project, with final approval subject to the developers' final architectural design.

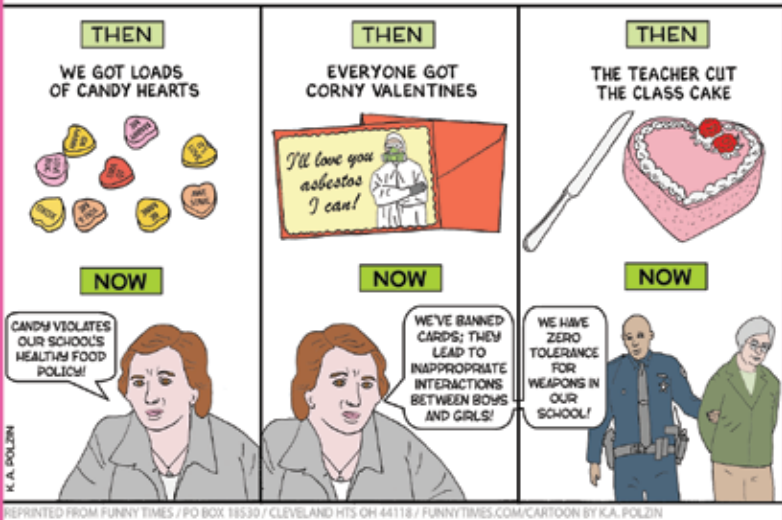
FutureHeights believes the

TOH project will bring many benefits to residents, far beyond the utility of the current surface parking lot and buffer space. A high-quality project that is appropriately sized and sensitive to the existing business district and residential neighborhood will increase our tax base and reduce the tax burden of current residents in the long run. It will add new housing options to attract new residents and enhance the reputation of the city. It will appropriately increase density to support existing businesses and add vitality to the business district. And, it will improve the quality of life for existing residents by providing goods and services that they need. In addition, we hope that the developer will make a meaningful contribution to the Cedar Fairmount SID in order to strengthen that organization and the community activities it sponsors.

The FutureHeights Planning & Development Committee has continued to monitor the progress of the project and has reviewed the latest plans and renderings submitted by the architects. We believe that the concept, scale, and overall design direction of the project are appropriate for the site. While we share the community's desire that the project's architecture be compatible with the early 20th century architecture in the neighborhood, we recognize that our historic homes and commer-

continued on page 3

VALENTINE'S DAY AT SCHOOL



Provided by *Funny Times*, a Cleveland Heights-based business

A consideration on Top of the Hill

Michael Knoblauch

I have been “sort of” aware of the Top of the Hill project, reading a few Web posting and local articles. Conversations with friends reveals a certain “ambiguity” about the project. My initial consideration on the design and plan: “Is this the best the city could do?”

As rendered in photographs, the design does not say, at least to me, “Welcome to Cleveland Heights!” I would expect a driver arriving at the top of Cedar Hill would have the same impression. If I were a resident of the Buckingham condos, I would not appreciate having to look at the back end of this building. I think/hope something more creative and less automobile-centric is possible.

My other concern is more systemic—the use of tax incentives and abatement for project justification. Every local project that receives these incentives is financed by the tax-paying residents of Cleveland Heights, who have lived for years with stagnant property values and rising tax millage. If a project cannot stand on its own given the prevailing tax structure, then maybe it should not be undertaken. Abatements and TIFFs are a slippery slope and once a community sets on that path it is nearly impossible to get off.

In the last analysis, it is all about design. Good design pays for itself in a multitude of ways and renders timeless value. The costs of bad design are continuing and never ending. The CH-UH school system’s open-plan elementary schools are the sine qua non example of how a bad design inflicted cost and damage to Cleveland Heights. The total

cost of this design is incalculable to the community and we pay a cost each day. I cannot imagine how many families either moved away or put their children in alternate schools in the decades since these schools were built. It is difficult to teach and learn in these buildings, and it is equally difficult to look at them. Both users and viewers are paying the price. Those in city government need to be mindful that there is a plaque in the lobby of each building “recognizing” the architect and listing the names of school board members at the time of construction who approved the design. Each deserves the ignominy of this recognition.

More work is needed on the Top of the Hill design to resolve issues of visual impact, land use, architecture, automobile centrality, and the effect on the existing community. Consider the remodeled high school building; every time I drive by it, I feel a sense of belonging to a community that cares about integrity, design, space and people. As rendered, the Top of the Hill is, at best, middling. Better is possible.

To the city and its designers and architects: Design is an expression of understanding and respect of your constituencies. As a citizen of Cleveland Heights, and a tax-paying, financing stakeholder in this project, please make this a “great project”—something each of us in Cleveland Heights can admire and “own”—today, tomorrow and for years. That is your job.

Michael Knoblauch is a 40-plus-year resident of Cleveland Heights, and a former FutureHeights board member.

LETTERS continued from page 2

cial buildings are significant and valuable precisely because they cannot be replicated in our current time. We, therefore, support construction that is of our era and of high-quality materials that will withstand the test of time. We also encourage the project architects to further develop the concepts for the two public green spaces in the plan to ensure that they will meet the community’s needs.

Building anything in a developed area is always difficult. We have been inspired by the many residents and other stakeholders who have paid attention to this process, have asked good questions, and have made their concerns and aspirations known. It is important that we “get it right” and

hold the developer to the highest standards. We are encouraged that the developer has continued to incorporate stakeholder input into the project and that the architecture and site plan have continued to evolve. This responsiveness engenders confidence that the project is proceeding in the right direction.

We trust that the city’s Architectural Board of Review will engage in a rigorous process. We are involved, and will continue to comment and question as we go forward.

Deanna Bremer Fisher, Executive Director of FutureHeights
Julia Kious Zabell, President, FutureHeights Board of Directors

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In defense of density at Cedar Fairmount/Top of the Hill

Brendan Ring

Nighttown first opened for business in 1965. I started working there in 1992. When I bought the place in 2001, business was just so-so. Eighteen years later, Nighttown

thrives because we added three outdoor dining areas, a world-class music calendar, a changed menu and other innovations that have made Nighttown a regional destination for a diverse clientele which benefits all of Cedar Fairmount.

However, with the cost of food, people and benefits constantly on the rise, as well as the addition of scores of new restaurants in Greater Cleveland (with a population that isn't increasing), it's a continual struggle to remain a destination location. So, too, do my fellow merchants and property owners face similar challenges in the Cedar-Fairmount area.

One hundred years ago, downtown Cleveland had excitement and density, as did Doan's Corners, which was centered around 105th and Euclid. One hundred years ago, the Cedar Fairmount district was designed to be the urban gateway to the Heights, smaller in footprint, but with a similar muscular vitality, high atop Cedar Glen, truly on top of a big hill.

I happen to believe that the Flaherty & Collins project proposed for the Top of the Hill is the right project with the right mix of apartments, shops and green

space. The time is right to return density to the Top of the Hill.

From NewUrbanism.org: "Nearly every great city, town, and neighborhood around the world are of higher density. That's why everyone loves living there, and why so many tourists go there on holiday. Most early American cities built before 1945 were designed with higher densities, and are now the places with the highest property values, and are some of the most sought after places to live."

Here's a little history of the Cedar-Fairmount area known as Top of the Hill: Around 1920, two apartment buildings were built directly west of where Nighttown now exists. An eight-story apartment building (actually, closer to 10 stories if you take into account the fact that the front door was above the Cedar Road grade, plus the building had a tall parapet at the top) was built where Nighttown's outdoor dining area is now located. In 1946, that apartment building was converted into a general medical and surgical hospital with around 200 beds, generally referred to as Doctors' Hospital. The other apartment building, directly to the east and up against the still-there Buckingham, was quite wide and five-stories tall. Both apartment buildings were torn down in 1969 and the land converted to a parking lot, until the creation of Nighttown's Stephan's Green outdoor dining area 33 years later. Photos of the historical buildings formerly on the site can be viewed at: <https://tinyurl.com/TOHPics>.

Density encourages activity for residents and visitors who bring spendable dollars, thereby energizing an area. That's why the Cedar Fairmount Special Improvement District (which is funded by a voluntary property tax over and above the taxes levied by the city and county, paid for by myself and a dozen or so commercial property owners in the district) unanimously supports the proposal to return density to the Top of the Hill area.

The proposed project is a 21st-century investment offering scaled buildings with residential density distributed throughout the site. In the words of local architect Paul Volpe, the design that's been submitted to the city's Architectural Board of Review, which continues to evolve, as do all similar projects at the point of submission, "offers architecture that is fresh, modern, enduring and contextually appropriate."

The Cedar Fairmount Special Improvement District believes this project will enhance and complete the Cedar Fairmount mixed-use district, all within the geographic footprint intended by the architects and planners who originally planned the Cedar Fairmount commercial district, offering new vitality to our neighborhood.

Brendan Ring is owner of Nighttown and the CFSID treasurer.



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Before 'diversity' – the integration of Cleveland Heights [part 2 of 3]



HEIGHTS OF
DEMOCRACY

Carla Rautenberg and Deborah Van Kleef

"It was scary because of the attention we got," recalled Doris Allen. She and her husband Wendell purchased a gracious house on Lee Road in 1965. Although theirs was one of the first black families to move to Cleveland Heights, they weren't looking to make a point, to be pioneers or activists, or to put their young family in danger. They simply wanted their five children, then between the ages of 1 and 10, to grow up in a racially, ethnically and religiously diverse community.

While Heights Citizens for Human Rights (HCHR) reached out to the Allens, others were not so welcoming. Police stopped their eldest son, still in elementary school, and questioned him for no apparent reason. When Wendell Allen went to a nearby store the proprietor asked, "Why don't you shop in your own neighborhood?"

After garbage and stink bombs were hurled into their front yard, HCHR members spent the night.

Recalling racially motivated bombings in 1965 and 1967, members advised the Allens to put the children in a back bedroom.

In addition to receiving support from white fair housing activists, the city's new black residents formed close ties with one another. This solidarity enabled them to stick it out and ultimately to challenge racism throughout the city's institutions.

Many, including the Allens, Bernice and Lacey Lott, Cornelius Edwards, Betty Nelson and Robert and Leatrice Madison, went on to become community leaders and barrier-breakers.

By early 1972, another effort by white "housewives" was brewing in Suzanne Nigro's living room. Nigro and other members of St. Ann Catholic Church had been trained and encouraged by the recently formed Commission on Catholic Community Action to work for social justice in their community.

The women were aware, anecdotally and through personal experience, of steering and blockbusting in Cleveland's near-east suburbs. They decided, according to Nigro, that "[a]s our first step we needed to document what was happening relative to home sales in Cleveland Heights." They formed the St. Ann Social Action Housing Committee, and masterminded the St. Ann's

Audit (which would later become a national model).

The method they adopted, known as checking, had been used to document discrimination in rental housing, but the St. Ann committee was the first to apply it to housing sales. Studying real estate ads, they would identify a house on the market, and assign two volunteer couples, one black and one white, to pose as prospective buyers.

The checkers sought the same type of house, and were assigned identical incomes, numbers of children, etc. They differed only by race, and were trained to carefully record their experiences. The audit documented blatant steering and starkly different treatment. A mere eight years after HCHR began welcoming black home buyers to Cleveland Heights, it was clear agents were steering white buyers away.

In September 1972, the St. Ann committee presented its results to Cleveland Heights City Council. The following year the newly formed Heights Community Congress made real estate checking an ongoing part of its housing programs, and ultimately sued several realtors for discrimination, testing the federal Fair Housing Act of 1968.

CORRECTION: In our January column we stated, "In the sum-

mer of 1970 a group of white youths attacked black youths at the YMCA." The agency was the YM-YWCA. According to witness Doris Allen, no physical attacks took place. The behavior of the white youths is more accurately described as menacing. We regret the errors.

Carla Rautenberg is a writer, activist and lifelong Cleveland Heights resident. Deborah Van Kleef is a musician and writer, and has lived in Cleveland Heights for most of her life. Contact them at heightsdemocracy@gmail.com.

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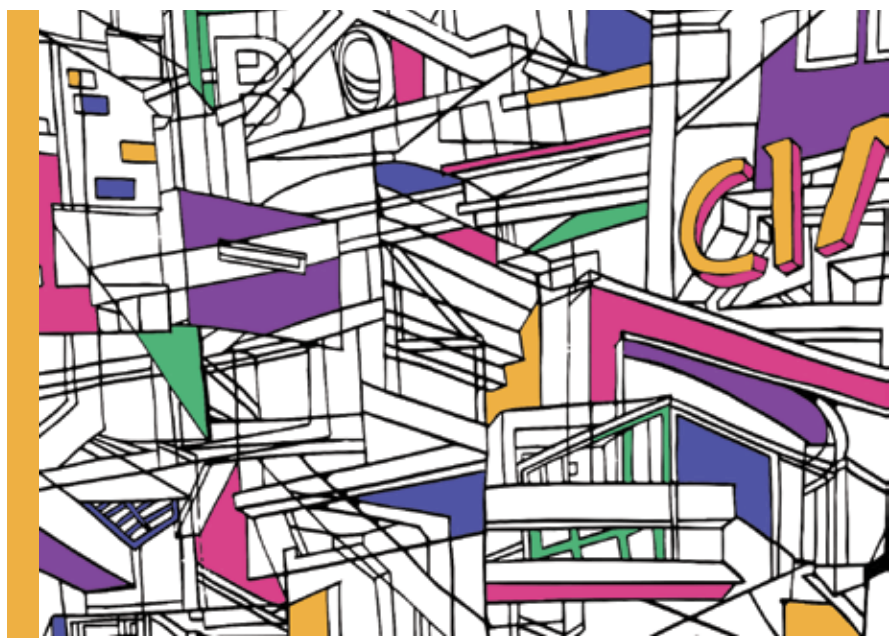


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Learning how to learn at Boulevard Elementary



**THE COMMON
GOOD**

Susie Kaeser

I like to learn. It keeps me alive, keeps boredom at bay and, I hope, makes me a better citizen. My curiosity has led to satisfying employment.

While “learner” is the job title we most frequently assign to students, learning is, in fact, a lifelong necessity for all of us. For that reason, I am thrilled to report that the teachers and principal at Boulevard Elementary School are paying a lot of attention to helping their students master the skills and enjoy the thrills of being learners.

While test-driven public policy makes it advantageous to help students build their test-taking muscles, and puts a premium on getting the “right” answer, Boulevard is focused on developing powerful learners. Mistakes are an expected part of the process.

During the 2017–18 school year, teachers asked students to explain what makes a good learner. They were shocked by the responses: Follow rules, listen to the teacher, don’t talk, be nice.

Being compliant is useful, but it doesn’t help a student tackle new subjects.

Teachers are learners, too, and when the Boulevard teachers realized they had missed something profoundly important, they jumped into John Hattie’s research on the essential skills for learning. Helping children become engaged learners has been the focus of their professional development work for more than a year.

To translate their learning into action, the teachers named six essential characteristics of a good learner. Walk through the school and you will be greeted by superheroes whose names are tied to those qualities: Reflective Roxanne, Problem-Solving Sam, Persistent Pablo, Collaborative Corey, Engaged Emma and Inquisitive Imani.

Principal Michael Jenkins used his arts background to draw the characters. Students can identify with the superheroes, and

they know these attributes will make them powerful! It’s a great message.

School is full of ideas and information and tasks that students don’t already know about but are expected to conquer. If you don’t have a way to find your way through the unknown, it can be terrifying, overwhelming, discouraging.

During my time as a tutor, I’ve seen kids give up because they were faced with something they didn’t already know, but it is possible to give them the tools to keep their natural curiosity alive and stay engaged until the light goes on! Boulevard teachers are now busy sharing those tools.

One strategy is to ban erasers. It communicates that making mistakes is proof that you are trying—a far cry from the emphasis on the right answer. Teachers also encourage student risk-taking by making their classroom a “no-putdown zone.” Learning is hard work, and failure is a part of it.

Another strategy is a “wonder wall.” Teachers can reward being inquisitiveness by encouraging kids to identify things that interest them and spending time talking about those interests. Learning should include things that kids want to know!

I like the activities that promote persistence. Students are encouraged to use their brains, a book or a buddy before turning to the boss (the teacher) for help. A group activity asks class members to brainstorm ways to proceed when they are stuck.

Learning is hard work, and mastery is rewarding and empowering! Discovering your ability to learn is a tremendous source of hope and joy.

If Jenkins has his way, Boulevard’s children and staff will keep their eyes on the big prize, building a community of learners who experience the reward of figuring out something that was not previously understood. This is what it looks like when a school is not derailed by the debilitating emphasis on test-based accountability.

Susie Kaeser has been a public school advocate and resident of Cleveland Heights for 40 years. She is co-convenor of the Heights Coalition for Public Education and the retired director of Reaching Heights.



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A wish list for the new superintendent



A TEACHER'S VOICE

Ari Klein

I am only the third president of the CH-UH Teachers Union in 48 years. There is considerable job stability and longevity among school employees, but this does not seem to extend to administrators. During my more than 30 years at CH-UH, there have been at least eight superintendents (including interims), and I would have a difficult time counting the number of principals with whom I have worked. Administrators who have stayed for any significant amount of time have been few.

That being said, CH-UH will be hiring a new superintendent this spring, and with this important decision will probably come a host of other changes. I have noticed that within a year of the arrival of a new superintendent, most of the central office administration changes, as well. The central office structure will change to accommodate the new leadership, and a certain amount of upheaval will occur as people are assigned new responsibilities.

Little of what goes on in central administration has a direct impact on what happens in the classrooms, though there will be a trickle-down effect as new procedures are put in place. This can be disruptive, although sometimes in a good way.

The teachers union has as much input into the selection of a new superintendent as everyone else. In other words, we were invited to focus groups and to fill out leadership surveys concerning which 10 aspects of leadership, out of 33 choices, are most important in a leader.

Personally, I do not have much confidence that the search firm hired to identify potential candidates will use this information to find someone who really fits well in CH-UH. There are

very few people in education with the ideal credentials who want to be a superintendent of a district of our size and demographic.

My wish list of attributes for the new CH-UH superintendent is long. I hope that we hire someone who doesn't believe that standardized test scores define children, and who doesn't believe the misleading data compiled by the state of Ohio regarding our students. I want someone who is willing to speak out against the inequalities and injustices in school funding in our state, and someone who is not reluctant to mobilize the community around these issues.

I want us to hire a leader who will take the time to learn what we do well in our schools and in our community, and what makes us unique. Many school leaders come with a mindset that whatever they did in their last school district is the way to do it here. We want someone who is open-minded, who will listen to different points of view, and who will make decisions that can be explained and accounted for.

We need someone who can admit a mistake and then work hard to correct it. We need someone who praises people for the good work they do, and is willing to hold people accountable when improvement is needed. We want someone who is compassionate, energetic, and willing to compromise, but who also has a vision to make us better.

How will our board of education find and retain such a leader? I wish our board well as it takes on this formidable task. I can offer the board assurances that the teachers and support staff I represent will continue to serve our students well, and that the union will continue its collaborative efforts with district administration.

Ari Klein is a lifelong community member, math teacher at Cleveland Heights High School, and president of the Cleveland Heights Teachers Union.

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University Heights City Council Meeting highlights



DECEMBER 17, 2018

Present were Mayor Michael Dylan Brennan, Vice Mayor Susan Pardee, and council members Pamela Cameron, John Rach, Michelle Weiss and Mark Wiseman. Also present were Law Director Luke McConville, and Clerk of Council Kelly Thomas. The meeting was held from 7 to 8:42 p.m.

Public comments

Tax relief promise: Kate Uhler of Fenwick Road once again asked for an update from Mayor Brennan on the tax relief promised during his campaign. She also filed a freedom of information request and was surprised to be charged 25 cents per page instead of the customary 5 cents, and requested a refund.

Award for video: Firefighters Local 974 President Keith Kanner reported that the video produced by Caleb Schuster for Mayor Brennan's election campaign won first prize in the International Association of Fire Fighters category of "Best affiliate public relations or political campaign or project" in 2018. The video can be viewed at: <http://review.wizehive.com/voting/view/affiliate2018winners/54447/5329134>.

Mayor's comments

Mayor Brennan reported that for 31 of the previous 36 days leaf crews have been out picking up leaves. He also noted that his own street's leaves have not been picked up in several weeks, so nobody is receiving preferential treatment. Pickup will continue through the end of the week, weather permitting. If leaves are not picked up, residents are urged to bag them and leave them out for trash collection.

Guide Studio proposal

Guide Studio, which recently completed the plan for a new [city] logo, was approved for the next phase of the project, to develop proposals for new signage and wayfinding, based on the needs of the city. The proposal for \$10,000 will include surveys, interviews and analysis leading to a complete concept design. Although the cost is within the mayor's approval limit, he asked council to approve the expenditure, as money has already been spent on this project, and he wants to continue council's involvement.

Council assignment changes

John Rach will take over as council's planning commission liaison, and Mark Wiseman will become the alternate. Wiseman had requested this mid-term change due to his recent appointment to the new community improvement corporation.

Community improvement updates

The new traffic signal at the Speedway gas station at Cedar and Green roads is awaiting the acquisition of a small piece of property from Speedway for installation of the pole. Speedway has until the end of December to respond. The mid-block crosswalks and the new bike lanes on Warrensville Center Road have now been approved by ODOT to be installed next year. Patrick Grogan-Myers,

director of housing and community development, reported that work is beginning at the corner of Cedar and Taylor roads, with the old parking lot moved and some small trees and shrubs planted.

Contract with Solon jail

Police Chief Rogers reported that the city has just begun the second year of its contract with Solon for use of its jail and has already reached the benchmark for usage, meaning that the city will now owe an additional \$10,000 to Solon for 2018.

Delinquent property taxes

Grogan-Myers reported that letters have been sent to 23 property owners with delinquent property tax bills in an effort to address the problem proactively. The spring mailing brought in payments of \$90,000.

Amend the U.S. Constitution

Councilwoman Cameron reported that the request from a private citizen for council to ask Congress to address the impact of Citizens United has been referred to committee for further consideration.

One final nice note

Fire Chief Perko reported that the winners of the coloring contest were to win a free ride to school in a fire truck. However, both winners are home-schooled so instead they are receiving a tour of the city in the fire truck.

LWV Observer: Wendy S. Deuring.

JANUARY 7, 2019 - No LWV Observer was available to cover this council meeting.

University Heights City Council observers needed!

Lack of volunteers has weakened LWV's coverage of University Heights City Council. We now have only one University Heights observer where a minimum of two are needed, and even more would be welcome.

You can help. The only requirement is that LWV observers be impartial and unaffiliated with any campaign for University Heights council member or mayor. Although preferable, you do not have to be an LWV or a University Heights resident. The LWV observer program helps our democracy through citizen oversight of governing bodies.

If interested, please contact Maryann Barnes at mbarnes@lwvgreatercleveland.org.

To receive email postings of full reports, send an email to heights@lwvgreatercleveland.org or join through Google groups using "lwv-chuh observer reports" as a search phrase.

These reports contain member observation and selected highlights of public meetings and are not official statements of the Heights Chapter of the League of Women Voters of Greater Cleveland. This disclaimer must accompany any redistribution of these reports.

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University Heights kids 'name that chicken'



Mayor Brennan with Clare Dolan and Jackson Lovato.

Mike Cook

Thanks to Clare Dolan, 13, and Jackson Lovato, 9, the University Heights chicken has a name.

Of all the swag items bearing the University Heights logo for sale at UH City Hall, the most popular by far is the plush chicken. Inspired by the recent local ordinance allowing residents to keep chickens, the chicken proudly models the new city logo on his dark blue T-shirt.

In a few short months, the chicken has become the unofficial city mascot; but, the chicken needed a name. Thus, city officials invited local kids to "name that chicken."

"There were many proposed names submitted," Mayor Michael Dylan Brennan explained at a recent UH City Council meeting. "Names like Patty, Tender, Nugget, Curry, Piccata, Cordon Bleu, Extra Crispy, Marsala and Lincoln Park—these delectable names were all submitted by adults and, thankfully, were not valid entries in the contest, as we accepted

entries only on behalf of children."

There was only one winning name, but two winning entrants, as two children nearly simultaneously submitted the same winning name—Cooper.

Brennan presented Clare and Jackson with their very own swag bags, including their very own Coopers.

Cooper the Chicken plush toys are on sale for \$10 at University Heights City Hall, during regular business hours.

Mike Cook is the communications and civic engagement coordinator for University Heights.

UH joins with USO to assist Coast Guard families



When the federal government shutdown, U.S. Coast Guard families were among those not receiving paychecks. The USO of Northern Ohio teamed up with local governments, including University Heights, to collect items to assist local Coast Guard families. The USO is still collecting, just in case the shutdown starts again on Feb. 15, and University Heights City Hall continues to be a drop-off location for donated goods. As of Jan. 28, residents from University Heights and surrounding areas had filled the box nine times, and donated more than \$1,200 in gift cards. During regular business hours (Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.), you can continue to assist families by dropping off the following items: non-perishable foods, personal hygiene products, household cleaning items, laundry soap and supplies, baby diapers, paper products, grocery gift cards and gas cards.

State of the City address set for Feb. 13

Mike Cook

University Heights Mayor Michael Dylan Brennan will give his first "State of the City" report to residents on Wednesday, Feb. 13, 7 p.m., at the Jardine Room on the campus of John Carroll University.

In his speech, Brennan will review 2018 accomplishments, and look ahead to plans for 2019.

Mike Cook is the communications and civic engagement coordinator for University Heights.

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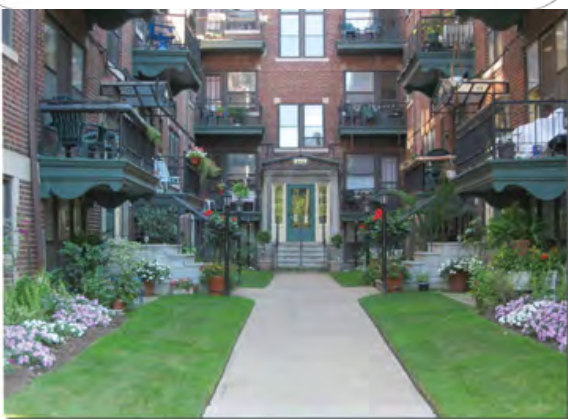
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HAITIAN continued from page 1

"After Gary and Melody came, my life changed," said Damus. Through the couple, Damus was finally able to communicate with his wife and children in Haiti, albeit through a snail-mail relay of snap-shotted letters and Facebook messages.

"Not only did Melody and Gary agree to be sponsors," said Hill, "they took on his case and created a community around him." They organized meetings and arranged for French-speaking visitors. "They are model organizers in a case like this," said Hill.

Meanwhile, Damus' attorney and the ACLU kept fighting. "Damus was denied parole multiple times after he had won asylum on two separate occasions. ICE was refusing to follow its own parole guidelines, which is why

the ACLU took the case to federal court and won," Ford said. She explained that the December 2018 court victory, in which Damus was released under the condition of sponsorship, has significant implications for other asylum seekers who have been denied parole.

Damus has lived with Hart and Benjamin since his December release, and is, effectively, their dependent until his legal status changes.

Community support has grown since Damus' case made the national media. After reading a *Washington Post* article about Damus, Heights resident Elana Baldwin and friends gathered their kids to make cards and gifts. For five families and their eight school-aged kids, welcoming Damus was a way "to get our kids active in social justice and

community service," said Baldwin. "When I told my kids about Ansly, they were absolutely struck by the idea that he was here without his family."

Genevieve Baldwin, age 6, said it was important "because he doesn't have his family with him, and he doesn't have any friends. He could look at our pictures to make him happier." Her gesture had the desired effect. I watched Damus' face light up as he received a hand-crafted picture frame, keepsake box, and beautiful children's art to fill his room.

"The Cleveland Heights community has been a huge part of Damus' parole case," said Ford. "Not only have they provided a physical space for him to live, but they have emotionally supported Damus through some seriously tough times and continue to do so. The

Cleveland Heights community has really become a community of activists—and that is what we need now more than ever."

Damus' asylum appeal is still pending.

He will be a volunteer teacher of electrical skills at the Home Repair Resource Center this February and March.

Community members are invited to a Feb. 23 fundraiser to contribute to Damus' legal expenses and family needs. E-mail jeffsmith2756@gmail.com or cathy.a.crimi@gmail.com for details.

Mostly a mom, Shari Nacson, is a freelance editor, social worker, and nonprofit consultant who makes her home in Cleveland Heights. More than anything, Nacson is inspired by kids and adults who build connection through kindness.

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Cleveland Heights City Council Meeting highlights



LEAGUE OF
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JANUARY 7, 2019

Council members present were Mayor Carol Roe, Vice Mayor Melissa Yasinow, Mary Dunbar, Kahlil Seren, Jason Stein and Michael N. Ungar. The seventh council seat is unoccupied. The meeting lasted from 7:35 to 8 p.m.

Public comments

Immigration Task Force report: Robin Koslen, a member of the Immigration Task Force, stated that the body listened to divergent opinions from police and community members, and developed workable, livable solutions. She is concerned to see legislation voted on. Mayor Roe assured her that the report will be discussed at the committee of the whole meeting on Jan. 14.

Top of the Hill: Joyce Rajke noted the effort dedicated to the Top of the Hill project last year and stated that some meetings are not reported on the city website. City Manager Tanisha Briley responded that they will be published as soon as the minutes are approved.

Trash and recycling: Jordan Davis, representing the Sustainable Heights Network, is interested in network members becoming involved in consideration of city refuse handling. Ungar announced that a trash and recycling task force will be formed soon to study, evaluate and recommend an approach to refuse collection. The process will be transparent and public, the meetings recorded, and a portal for citizen input created. He suggested members of Sustainable Heights apply to participate.

Neighborhood safety: A resident of South Taylor Road discussed her concerns for neighborhood safety, prevention and security, and urged more cameras.

Council committee chairs

Due to the open seat, chairs of council

committees will be changing. Yasinow will chair the Safety and Municipal Services Committee and Ungar will head Planning and Development.

Police salaries

Council unanimously passed an ordinance to incorporate the terms of the recent labor agreement with the Northern Ohio Patrolmen's Benevolent Association, covering the period April 1, 2018 through March 31, 2021.

Council seat applications

Applications for appointment to the open council seat will close on Jan. 15. There have been 24 filed so far. Stein also encouraged citizens to apply for positions on city boards and commissions.

Speed limits

Dunbar announced that the Housing and Transportation Committee will consider speed limits on city streets later this month.

Mayor's report

Mayor Roe acknowledged the impending departure of Superintendent Talisa Dixon from the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District, expressing how much she has enjoyed working with Dixon. She added that council will present input into the search for a new superintendent. Roe also noted that the Ohio Mayors Alliance met with both candidates for governor last fall to express concerns about diminished state funding for cities.

LWV Observer: Blanche Valancy.

Look for earlier and often expanded postings of meeting summaries online at www.heightsobserver.org. See disclaimer on page 8.

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Cleveland Heights parent develops free service to connect special needs adults

Denise Walters

Craig Matis has lived in Cleveland Heights for nearly 40 years. The father of an adult son with special needs, Matis discovered that, once his son left school, the effort to socialize with others was difficult for him. He found that other parents shared his concerns—that outside of an academic environment, it was difficult for those with special needs to find and develop connections with others.

In 2013, Matis initiated Connect to One (www.connectcle.org), an online service that matches up those who are disabled, both mentally and physically, and seeking one-on-one friendships and/or relationships. Despite the significant growth, over the past 30 years or so, of social programs and activities that address the special needs population, the majority focus on group events, rather than on the development of one-on-one relationships.

Connect to One operates a pri-

vate and secure database that enables individuals to create their own profiles and browse the site's directory for those with similar interests and lifestyles.

After a new registrant's online application has been reviewed and verified, Matis schedules a face-to-face meeting. After that initial meeting, the new member is able to access the website's directory, which has all of the members posted. The directory is password-protected, so only authorized members can view the information. Each member can view the directory at any time, and request a meeting with someone from the site. Matis will then arrange the meeting between the two parties.

The service is free to adults (18 years and older). Anyone who lives in a group home, with parents, or independently is welcome to participate.

Denise Walters, a friend of Matis, has lived in Cleveland Heights for nearly 10 years.

Free class is among HRRC's February courses

David Brock

The Home Repair Resource Center (HRRC) will hold several workshops this month, beginning with a session on concrete countertops on Tuesday, Feb. 5. Participants in that workshop will learn the ins and outs of using concrete in countertops, including how to measure, pour, cut and finish it.

On Tuesday, Feb. 12, HRRC offers its popular power tools workshop. Those attending will get experience using miter, circular and reciprocating saws, as well as angle grinders, nail guns, and different kinds of drills. This class is a perfect primer for those thinking of making costly home repairs themselves.

The cost for each of the above workshops is \$25, and discounts for

residents of Cleveland Heights, as well as income-based discounts, are available.

A free class on natural building will be offered as a part of HRRC's monthly Free Monday series on Monday, Feb. 25. The class will cover how to build durable, long-lasting structures using natural materials such as mud, clay, straw and sand.

All workshops begin at 7 p.m. and take place at the HRRC office, 2520 Noble Road.

To register for workshops, get more information or apply for discounts, visit www.hrhc-ch.org, or call 216-381-6100, ext. 16, or e-mail dbrock@hrhc-ch.org.

David Brock is the outreach and education coordinator for HRRC.

REACHING HEIGHTS continued from page 1

a Capella Choir, Barbershoppers, Symphony, Symphonic Winds, and Jazz Ensemble. The Gospel Choir, a school club, will also perform.

Pam Kelly, a cellist and parent of a student musician, was impressed by the 2015 concert. "It's an absolute delight to see how the music program from the elementary schools through the high school really excites and stimulates the creativity of our kids," she said. "It's also a real treat to have students in all those grades participate in such a grand event together. We live in a very special district, and

I am thankful that the arts are still so strong and treasured, and inspiring so many young students and their families."

You can purchase Reaching Musical Heights box seats and benefit reception tickets from Reaching Heights directly by calling 216-932-5110 or online at www.reachingheights.org. Purchase concert-only tickets, starting at \$10, from the Severance Hall box office: 216-231-1111, or online at www.clevelandorchestra.com.

Krista Hawthorne is the executive director of Reaching Heights, and a proud and grateful Heights Tiger.



Krista Hawthorne, director of Reaching Heights, with Tatyana Rehn and John Emerman, owners of The Stone Oven Bakery Café.

Stone Oven and Coventry P.E.A.C.E. receive Reaching Heights awards

Krista Hawthorne

On Dec. 11, Reaching Heights, the local nonprofit that connects the community to the Heights public schools, held its annual meeting in the former Coventry School building, home to the new Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Campus (a collaborative of seven arts and community organizations).

Each year, Reaching Heights invites members of the community to hear the highlights of the organization's year and to recognize individuals and local businesses for the extraordinary support they give to Heights public schools.

Reaching Heights' board and staff members thanked Ashlie Dyer for her six years as an active board member, vice president and president. Dyer, a Heights alumna and avid Heights Tiger, will be missed for her energy, enthusiasm and endless good ideas. Mazie Adams was introduced as the newest member of the organization's board of directors.

Reaching Heights then recognized this year's Friends of Public Education and Outstanding Community Partner for their contributions to the shared responsibility for the successful education of all students attending CH-UH public schools.

Coventry P.E.A.C.E. received a Friend of Public Education award for preserving and maintaining Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park. Originally established in 1992, the organization raised money and gathered hundreds of volunteers to build the multi-level playground and learning gardens on the grounds of the former elementary school.

The group continues to support and maintain the playground. Erick Kauffman and Ray Gonzalez, volunteer officers for the past 15 years,

accepted the award, along with longtime volunteers Joanne Campbell, Pam Bertaud, Sue Datta, and Marilyn McLaughlin, a founding member of the park's planning group.

John Emerman and Tatyana Rehn, owners of The Stone Oven Bakery Café, accepted Reaching Heights' Outstanding Community Partner award. They were honored for more than two decades of providing generous support to public school groups and events in the Heights, and for hiring many local students. Emerman and Rehn were touched to be honored, and Emerman commented that their daughters are proud graduates of Heights High.

Reaching Heights provides information, programs and events that enrich students and support teachers. For more information, call Reaching Heights at 216-932-5110, e-mail krista@reachingheights.org, or visit the office at 2843 Washington Blvd. in Cleveland Heights.

Krista Hawthorne is the executive director of Reaching Heights.

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CHUH continued from page 1

Superintendent Talisa Dixon agreed to a contract today with the Columbus City School District as its next Superintendent/CEO.

Dixon will start in Columbus on March 4. Any transition time spent before that date will be covered using her vacation days.

The CH-UH BOE has begun the search process of finding its next superintendent and will appoint an interim superintendent to lead the district beginning in March through the end of the school year.

We are obviously disappointed to be losing our superintendent in March, but we cannot hold Dr. Dixon back from an opportunity she feels she needs to pursue. We must express strong concerns about the integrity of the Columbus Board of Education and how this process has played out. We approached Dr. Dixon's departure with good faith that Columbus would honor the need for her to complete the school year. With disregard, they chose otherwise. We wish her the best of luck."

To inform its search, the BOE held community focus group meetings in December. The BOE's consultant, Ray and Associates, facilitated the discussions with various groups, including community leaders, local government officials, nonprofits, district staff, students and stakeholders.

"We were very pleased with the amount of participation and feedback we received from community stakeholders," said Jim Posch, then BOE president. "The CH-UH community is known for its civic engagement, and

this process was a testament to that reputation. As a board, we feel better prepared to know what our community desires in a superintendent as we begin the process of selecting candidates and evaluating potential finalists."

The feedback elicited a set of criteria that the BOE will use to evaluate potential superintendent candidates:

- Possesses excellent people skills, presents a positive image of the CH-UH district, and will listen to input and make a decision when necessary.
- Is familiar with the opportunities and challenges inherent in working with a community and student population of great diversity: racial, religious, socio-economic, cultural, ethnic.
- Inspires trust, has high levels of self-confidence and optimism, and models high standards of integrity and personal performance.
- Is a strong communicator: speaking, listening and writing.
- Has experience recruiting and maintaining exceptional staff.
- Has experience dealing with employee representative groups/unions.
- Has experience improving educational outcomes and closing gaps in student achievement.
- Promotes a positive and professional environment for district employees and board.
- Is committed to, and has experience dealing with, racial equity.
- Has experience leading innovation, reform and advocacy efforts.

Scott Wortman is the supervisor of communications for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District.

Kaye Lowe retires with a party at Nighttown



Friends of Kaye Lowe gathered at Nighttown on Jan. 16 to honor her upon her retirement after 18 years of service as executive director of the Cedar Fairmount Special Improvement District (CFSID) and its predecessor, the Cedar Fairmount Business Association. Members of Cleveland Heights City Council presented her with a plaque at the event. Pictured (left to right) are CH Council Member Mary Dunbar, Kaye Lowe, CH Mayor Carol Roe, and CH Council Member Michael Ungar. CFSID named Myra Orenstein as its new executive director (see article on page 18).

MAROTTAS continued from page 1

ment to dine slowly and enjoy their tables, unhurried, post-meal.

A family-run business, Marotta's first opened on Lee Road in 2000. The Heights community surrounded the family with support when co-owner Alicia Linihan died suddenly in 2016.

While a sign of the restaurant's longevity and future, the renovations are a bittersweet step, as Alicia's legacy is interwoven in ev-

ery prior decor decision. "For me, it's amazing to have my aunt still around through the restaurant," said Quinn. "She was so hands-on here."

Having grown up in the restaurant, Quinn knows how to preserve Alicia's vision while ensuring the business will thrive across decades. "Aside from having four happy, healthy kids, this is Alicia's legacy," said Quinn.

For updates on the renovation and re-opening, follow Marotta's on Facebook and Instagram, or visit www.marottas.com.

Mostly a mom, Shari Nacson, is a freelance editor, social worker, and nonprofit consultant who makes her home in Cleveland Heights.

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St. Paul's Episcopal Church



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Tuesday, February 6 at 7 p.m. Eucharist & Meal
w/St. Alban's Episcopal Church, 2555 Euclid Heights Blvd.

Tuesday, March 5 at 6 p.m. Service Project
Sorting Books at Cleveland Kids' Book Bank
3635 Perkins Ave. Suite 1E

Friday, April 5 at 6:30 p.m.
Theology in the Market Hall
Van Aken District

Wednesday, May 1 at 6 p.m.
Local Abundance Kitchen Cooking Class at St. Paul's

+++

Contact the Rev. Jessie Dodson for details:
jdodson@stpauls-church.org

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CH Senior Center News

Amy Jenkins

February is Heart Awareness Month. It begins on Friday, Feb. 1, with National Wear Red Day—a day designated to raise awareness about cardiovascular disease.

The Cleveland Heights Senior Activity Center (SAC) offers programs, activities and classes to help seniors lower their risk of heart disease.

On Tuesday, Feb. 5, 1 p.m., blood-pressure monitoring is offered through Case Western Reserve University’s student-run free clinic. (Check “News for Senior Adults” at www.chparks.com for days and times when other agencies visit to offer this service.)

In addition, an electronic blood-pressure monitoring device is available anytime the SAC is open; staff can demonstrate how to use it. Weight can be monitored and tracked using the scale located on the fitness center’s track. SAC members with a current card are encouraged to use the track for free any weekday, 1–2 p.m.

Many SAC exercise classes are free or can be taken for a small fee, and any fee-based exercise class can be tried one time for free. Check SAC’s newsletter for a complete list of exercise programs.

Stress management has also

been found to benefit heart health. The socializing that happens at SAC can reduce stress, and the center’s Relaxation and Meditation group meets weekly with this goal in mind.

If stress seems overwhelming, make an appointment to talk with a CH Office on Aging social worker. They can be reached at 216-691-7377, and are available to help.

The Cleveland Heights SAC, located in the CH Community Center at 1 Monticello Blvd., offers a variety of programming for those 60 and older. A complete schedule of programs is published in the community center’s newsletter, available online at www.chparks.com.

SAC membership is \$5 for Cleveland Heights residents. To sign up, bring a recent piece of mail (such as a bill) and a photo ID.

University Heights residents who would like to join SAC must first register with Patrick Grogan-Myers, University Heights community development coordinator, at 216-932-7800, ext. 203, or pgrogan@universityheights.com. Membership is \$10 for University Heights seniors.

Amy Jenkins is supervisor at the Cleveland Heights Office on Aging and the Senior Activity Center. She can be reached at 216-691-7379 or ajenkins@clvhts.com.

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UH Senior Happenings

Senior Happenings, sponsored by the city of University Heights, are open to all senior citizens. Events take place on Thursdays at 2 p.m. at the University Heights Library. To receive the monthly schedule by e-mail, call 216-932-7800, ext. 205, or send an e-mail to info@universityheights.com.

Feb. 7: Felicia Adams, administrator of the Senior Companion Program at Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging, will discuss the work of the program. It provides trained volunteers, who have a passion for helping others, to give one-on-one personalized attention to a senior citizen who may be socially isolated, perhaps because family bonds have

been stretched or frayed.

Feb. 14: David Lucas, professor of English at Case Western Reserve University, is the poet laureate for the state of Ohio. He’ll describe his mission to promote literacy and learning, and encourage an appreciation of poetry with his column, “Poetry for People Who Hate Poetry.”

Feb. 21: Harold Spicknall, conductor for “Hum and Strum,” will host a sing-along to ukulele, guitar and mandolin music by the Cleveland Heights Senior Center Band.

Feb. 28: Rachel Kribbs, director of community partnerships at the Cleveland Institute of Music, will be accompanied by some of the school’s gifted instrumentalists and vocalists.

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4. **Reward yourself**; you’re about to be published. We’ll review and edit your article, and let you know if we have any questions.

Heights middle school students shine at Power of the Pen



Roxboro teams, in red, and Monticello teams, in black, were among students from more than 20 schools who participated in a December writing competition.

Krissy Dietrich Gallagher

Monticello and Roxboro middle school students wield a mighty power—the power of the pen. Last December, teams from both schools participated in the eighth Power of the Pen writing competition, hosted by Monticello at the Wiley campus.

More than 200 middle school students from 22 area schools attended the full-day Saturday event. After a get-to-know-you scavenger hunt, students participated in three rounds of intense competition. Groups of six students gathered in classrooms where they had 40 minutes to respond to an assigned writing prompt, for example, “describe a fate worse than death in your narrative,” or “liven things up in an otherwise

dull study hall.”

The stories generated in each session were judged on a series of criteria, including creativity, voice, grammar and spelling, and adherence to the assigned topic. Points were awarded to each student before they moved to the next room to compete against five different writers, using a new prompt. When the total points were tallied at day’s end, Heights’s middle school students did extremely well.

Roxboro’s seventh-grade team took the first prize, with Helena Duffy placing sixth overall, and Natalie Bier placing ninth. Monticello’s Laurel Buescher was the first-place winner in the seventh-grade competition, and Clare Dolan placed eighth amongst the eighth-graders.

Cleveland Heights University Heights Board of Education Meeting highlights

DECEMBER 18, 2018

President James Posch, Vice President Jodi Sourini, and board members Dan Heintz, Malia Lewis and Beverly Wright were present, as were Superintendent Talisa Dixon and Treasurer Scott Gainer. The meeting began at 7:32 p.m. and adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Public comments

Student outdoor time: Melissa Shmuck addressed the need for students to have more time outside. She cited research showing the many benefits of interaction with the outdoors, including improved test scores, greater student engagement and fewer disciplinary issues. She gave several documents to the board for review.

Discipline: Melissa Wood expressed concerns over disciplinary actions in the high school. She felt that student disciplinary policies should focus [more] on engaging students and less on punitive actions. She further suggested that additional efforts should be made in discussing discipline with staff and students at the high school.

Superintendent search

Posch began by addressing concerns about the superintendent search, taking place with the help of Ray and Associates. He wants the community to know that the board would be hiring the best candidate for our community, and not one based on the applicant’s race or sex.



Middle school change orders

Doug Myers of PMC Consultants updated the board on changes to the middle schools’ designs and progress in construction. The board unanimously passed a change order with a net total of \$195,325 for unforeseen site conditions, permit/code requirements, added work at the owner’s request, design clarifications, and credits back to the project.

Mapping elementary school space

Sourini and Lewis reported on their efforts to identify and label consistently the many spaces available in the elementary schools. This process is seen as an important step in determining how many and which elementary schools will be closed. The board reiterated that the savings generated from the closing of schools would be used to enhance elementary school programs. This process is ongoing.

LWV Observer: Robin Koslen.

Look for earlier and often expanded postings of meeting summaries online at www.heightsobserver.org. See disclaimer on page 8.

Those students, who practice once a week after school, will move on to the regional tournament in April. Top scorers in that event will then advance to the state tournament at the College of Wooster in May.

Joellen Denk, Roxboro librarian and Power of the Pen coach, said, “This absolutely makes them better writers. Getting weekly feedback from their peers and a teacher is incredible.”

Debbie Frost, district coordinator of Power of the Pen and intervention specialist at Monticello, added, “This is a great opportunity for CH-

UH to showcase our most talented and creative writers.”

Other Power of the Pen coaches are English language arts teachers Caitlin Gerber, Jeannise Andres and Ashley Riolo. Special support was provided by administrators Toia Robinson and Jeff Johnston, as well as the Heights Middle Schools PTA.

Krissy Dietrich Gallagher is a longtime resident of Cleveland Heights, and a former teacher. She is a freelance journalist under contract with the CH-UH city school district.

RoxArts event will benefit CH-UH students

Andrea C. Turner

RoxArts is hosting its first event benefiting a new fund promoting the arts and sciences for all 3,350 Cleveland Heights –University Heights elementary and middle school students. The art auction on March 9, at 7 p.m., will be held in Harcourt Manor, a mansion that was a setting in a Captain America movie, and will feature some of Cleveland’s finest artists in photography, sculpture, jewelry and print. Cocktails and hors d’oeuvres will be catered by fire food and drink.

For nearly four decades, RoxArts has raised money for enhanced arts curriculum at Roxboro Elementary and Middle schools. Last year, the RoxArts board and the Heights Schools Foundation (HSF) partnered to form RoxArts in Tiger Nation: A Creative Arts and Sciences Fund to bring arts enrichment opportunities to K–8 students in all CH-UH schools. This will be the kickoff event for the new fund.

The Tiger Nation Fund supports enrichment opportunities that introduce students to a variety of forms of creative expression. The goal is to build self-confidence and cultural and historical understanding, and improve cognition of core concepts. Projects that directly connect to identified curriculum themes, strands and topics are given highest priority. Much of the programming ties into International Baccalaureate and STEM curricula, including residencies with the Cleveland Museum of Art, Verb Ballets, Great Lakes Theater Festival, Ensemble Theatre, Arts-Inspired Learning, Roots of American Music, and Djabo African Dance Company.

All CH-UH elementary schools will have access to \$2,000 in grant funding, while each middle school can have \$3,000 per academic year. Grants are awarded through an online application process through HSF. RoxArts also sponsors special events and capital improvements.

“We heard from teachers and families throughout our city school district and felt strongly that there’s been a need to expand our offerings to all of the elementary and middle schools. We’re now proud to report



Harcourt Manor, an Elizabethan Revival-style mansion in Ambler Heights, will be the site of the first RoxArts in Tiger Nation: A Creative Arts and Sciences Fund benefit on March 9.

that RoxArts has funded programming impacting all children throughout the district, beyond Roxboro,” said Rosemary Pierce, president of the RoxArts board. “This event fundraiser will help us continue with that mission.”

The event site, Harcourt Manor, is the impeccably restored and decorated home of John and Anya Rudd, located in the Ambler Heights Historic District of Cleveland Heights. It is a four-story style mansion built by Kermod Gill, the builder of Terminal Tower, and designed by renowned architect, Frank Meade.

The nearly 100-year-old architectural gem has had only two owners. The home has several large-scale public rooms, including a marble-tiled sunroom and a speakeasy bar. The lower level ballroom has walkout access to the rear yard overlooking the ravine and Cedar Hill, and is flanked by two acres of gardens, with perennials dating back to the early 1900s. It’s been used as a backdrop for a local greeting card company’s holiday photo and was a location for the 2013 film “Captain America: The Winter Soldier.” (See the Cleveland.com Cool Spaces story at tinyurl.com/harcourtmanion.)

To purchase tickets, or learn more about sponsorship opportunities, visit www.roxarts.org. Ticket prices range from \$200 for patrons to \$125 for general admission, with a special price of \$75 for school staff. Attendees are encouraged to RSVP by Monday, Feb. 25.

Andrea C. Turner owns ACT One Communications, a marketing communications consulting firm based in Cleveland Heights. She is a member of the RoxArts benefit committee.

Library to offer monthly culinary series for teens



Funding from Friends of the Heights Libraries provided equipment for teen culinary literacy programs.

Sheryl Banks

This spring, Heights Libraries will launch a new program series for teens about cooking and healthy eating. Teen Cooking 101, a four-part, monthly series, will take place March through June during after-school hours and will cover topics such as food safety and nutrition, and teach skills such as measuring

and knife handling. While these won't be the first cooking-related programs at the library, they will be the first to focus on culinary education. "We have offered food and cooking-centered programs for teens in the past, including the Teen Chopped Challenge, the Teen Ramen Bar and the Soups of the World series, all of which have been

very popular," said Youth Services Librarian Sarah Rosenberger, who developed the series. "While these programs have been fun and have introduced teens to new foods and culinary cultures, we feel that there is an opportunity to impart even more knowledge in these areas with a more long-term, in-depth culinary literacy program." Local chef Marie Finch will teach the classes. Finch graduated from Ohio University with a bachelor's degree in food science and nutrition, and has five years' experience as a chef. She currently works at Culinary Occasions, a catering company in South Euclid.

"Children need programs like this in the community," said Finch, who participated in similar community-based educational programs as an undergrad. "These programs offer more than just cooking experience—they allow children to use basic math and science through measuring and mixing. They also teach children life skills and promote self-confidence and responsibility."

Thanks to a generous donation from Friends of the Heights Libraries, the Youth Services Department purchased equipment for the programs, including pots, pans, induction burners, blenders, scales, measuring cups and spoons, and bowls and knives. The equipment will allow program participants to accomplish tasks as simple as boil-

ing ramen noodles and as complex as sauteeing carefully chopped meat and vegetables. "Few schools offer home economics classes anymore, so there's a basic knowledge gap about food and food preparation," said Rosenberger. "Culinary literacy programs are great opportunities for teens to learn about food safety, cooking and nutrition, and to gain knowledge they can really use in their lives, whether for a job or just cooking for themselves."

In addition to helping local teens, the program also meets two of the library's strategic goals: to provide opportunities to positively impact community members' growth and personal development; and to be a bridge builder for community concerns, in this case between teens and local businesses looking to hire skilled workers.

"The ultimate outcomes we hope to achieve with this program are increased knowledge of food and nutrition, as well as the development of important culinary life skills for our local teens," said Rosenberger. "Plus, it's fun and delicious."

For more information, visit www.heightslibrary.org and watch for the spring issue of the library's programming guide, *Check Us Out*, in mid-February.

Sheryl Banks is the communications manager for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library System.

What's going on at your library?

Coventry Village Library
1925 Coventry Road, 216-321-3400

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 7 p.m.
Exploring the Heart of Dying Through Courageous Conversation. Join Atmarshardan Saraswati and Adaire Petrichor for a three-month exploration of Eastern philosophies in contemplative end-of-life practices.

Lee Road Library
2345 Lee Road, 216-932-3600

Sunday, Feb. 10, 2 p.m.
Great Lakes Theater Classics on Tour: Treasure Island. What is the price of adventure? Kids and families will venture out on the high seas with young Jim Hawkins as he searches for the lost treasure of Captain Flint. A brave band of actors embrace clowning, slapstick, puppetry, and music in the greatest pirate story ever told!

Noble Neighborhood Library
2800 Noble Road, 216-291-5665

Thursday, Feb. 28, 2 p.m.
Tech Talk: Social Media, Privacy, & You. Social media has become invaluable, but information posted on these websites is visible to others and can be used for nefarious purposes. This lecture will provide information on protecting social media information from three threats: hackers, other users, and companies. (Registration required.)

University Heights Library
13866 Cedar Road, 216-321-4700

Monday, Feb. 4, 6:30 p.m.
Impactful Documentaries. This series features documentaries about people, events and creations that had an impact. This month's film, "Look, Up in the Sky! The Amazing Story of Superman" (NR, 2006), history of the fictional superhero who first appeared in comics in 1938. It examines his portrayal in television and films, including the 1950s' TV series starring George Reeves.

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Library promotes wellness through programs and materials

Isabelle Rew

Many people struggle to keep New Year's resolutions of maintaining a healthy routine. For those looking for ways to stick to new goals, increase wellness literacy, or simply try something new, Heights Libraries offers programs and resources.

Heights Libraries' Coventry Village branch has made it a priority to develop ongoing programs that meet the diverse wellness needs of the community by recognizing that wellness comes in many forms.

"At Coventry, we focus on

wellness as a holistic condition of mind, body and spirit," said Patricia Gray, Coventry Village branch manager. "Our 'Step Out of Time' series, for example, features a variety of 'alternative' health practices, from yoga and meditation to acupuncture and aromatherapy. We have also explored specific spiritual beliefs that community members are interested in, such as Buddhism, reincarnation, past lives, spiritual cleansing practices, and many others."

Like all Heights Libraries' programs, Step Out of Time is free and open to the public.

This month's session will take place on Thursday, Feb. 14, at 7 p.m., and will feature a guided relaxation session and group meditation for both new and experienced participants.

While some of the library's wellness programs are one-offs, others take place more regularly.

Tai Chi, which meets four times a week, is one of Coventry's most popular programs. "It's a slow-motion, low-impact routine that is fun and doable at any age," Gray explained.

In addition to offering dozens of in-library programs, Heights Libraries provides a wide range of traditional print and digital

resources, on topics ranging from plant-based diets and exercise regimens to spirituality and budgeting.


Heights Libraries recently expanded its collections to include online streaming services, such as Acorn TV, Hoopla, and Kanopy.

Gray hopes that these programs and resources will serve as a point of departure, inspiring residents to incorporate healthy behaviors into their individual routines.

"These programs are settings where people talk to each other, make new friends, or discover new interests," said Gray. "Each will attract a somewhat different group, but the people who attend will learn a little bit about a new practice that they can apply to their lives or pursue further if they wish. I have had dozens of people thank me for the Step Out of Time series, saying that it has changed their lives for the better. And that, of course, is the goal."

For details on Heights Libraries programs and online resources, visit www.heightslibrary.org or call 216-932-3600.

Isabelle Rew is the community engagement associate for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library System.



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Cleveland Heights - University Heights Public Library Board Meeting highlights



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

DECEMBER 17, 2018

Present were President Abby Botnick, Vice President Chris Mentrek, and board members Dana Fluellen, James Roosa, Vikas Turakhia and Suzanne Moskowitz. Max Gerbec was absent.

Annual performance reviews

The annual staff appraisal process began on Dec. 7. A revised job performance evaluation measure will be used this year, based on feedback from the 2017 Employee Satisfaction Survey and Administrative Support Team. The new annual employee evaluation form has been reduced from 10 performance factors to five: customer focus, job productivity, teamwork, initiative and problem solving. Employees will complete an employee evaluation input document as their self-evaluation and e-mail it to their supervisor. There is a separate evaluation process for pages.

2019 board meeting calendar

The board approved a resolution to schedule the 2019 board meetings as follows (all meetings are Mondays except where noted): Jan. 22 (Tuesday), Feb. 18, March 18, April 15, May 20, June 17, July 15, Aug. 5, Sept. 16, Oct. 21, Nov. 18 and Dec. 16.

Website and e-newsletters report

The quarterly report for July, August and September 2018 showed that unique visitors were up for the quarter, from an average of 16,227 to an average of 16,708. Overall visits were also slightly up, with an average of 24,827 compared to the previous quarter's average of 23,855.

What's Going on @ Heights Libraries is a twice-monthly general information e-newsletter sent to more than 9,200 subscribers/cardholders. We Recommend provides monthly information about new books and movies

with 221 subscribers, up from 217 last quarter. TechKnowledge is a monthly e-newsletter about computer and technology classes and services; its number of subscribers is 335, up from 320 last quarter.

Culinary literacy

Heights Libraries brought culinary literacy programs to the community in 2018, including a teen version of "Chopped." Youth Services Librarian Sarah Rosenberger organized a popular Teen Chopped Challenge, where 30 teens worked together to make creative dishes, which were judged by librarians Charlotte Blasier and Shamekia Chandler.

Small Business Saturday

Heights Libraries participated in Small Business Saturday again this year. Tables were set up at all four branches, and customers with receipts showing they had spent at least \$20 at a local small business were entered into a raffle. In all, 105 people entered and 44 prizes were awarded.

Financial report

Heights Libraries' fiscal officer reviewed the Nov. 30, 2018 financial statement. Total cash balance across all accounts at the end of November was \$14,004,643.75. The board approved a resolution to accept the November financial and investment reports.

LWV Observer: Elizabeth M. Tracy.

Look for earlier and often expanded postings of meeting summaries online at www.heightsobserver.org. See disclaimer on page 8.

Kensington Pub owners have opening date in sight



The restored interior of the Kensington Pub.



Owners Brad Poe and Jeff King.

Shari Nacson

More than a year after they first hoped to open, in December 2017, the co-owners of Kensington Pub (2260 Lee Road) now hope to open within the next month—or two. Brad Poe and Jeff King faced bigger remodeling challenges than they expected in opening their first restaurant—what Poe called a “perfect storm of obstacles.”

“The original proposed opening was totally unrealistic in retrospect,” said Poe. “We encountered more renovations than we anticipated, especially since it was our first foray into restaurant ownership.”

He noted that he’s “very pleased with the exterior renovations, even with construction delays.” The exterior work was financed by the building’s landlord as part of a block-long renovation.

The project has been a labor of love for the two longtime Cleveland Heights residents, who have more than 40 years of restaurant experience between them.

The gastropub is located at the corner of Kensington and Lee roads, formerly the site of The Tavern Company, which moved across the street to the site of the former Colony Restaurant and Tavern.

Poe and King have respected the history of the space by restoring the familiar bar, tables and chairs, while adding a new floor, windows, doors and fully remodeled bathrooms.

Poe promises a “very nice, upscale gastropub” with a full menu of sandwiches, salads, appetizers and entrees.

The kitchen will stay open until 2 a.m. daily, serving a late-night menu. Weekends at Kensington Pub will feature Saturday lunch and Sunday brunch.

“We love the people here. We wanted to bring something special to the area,” said Poe, who envisions Kensington Pub as an exciting and fun place to which people will want to bring their kids.

“Inviting, comfortable, and kind of homey,” he said, is the goal.

For more information—and for sneak peeks inside the pub—follow The Kensington Pub on Facebook.

Mostly a mom, Shari Nacson, is a freelance editor, social worker, and nonprofit consultant who makes her home in Cleveland Heights.

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Cedar Fairmount SID names director

Brendan Ring

The Board of Directors of the Cedar Fairmount Special Improvement District (CFSID) has appointed Cleveland Heights resident Myra Orenstein as its new executive director. Orenstein follows in the footsteps of recently retired Kaye Lowe, who occupied the position for 18 years.

“Kaye did a remarkable job as executive director,” said Orenstein. “She helped grow the district from a merchants’ association, through its development as a Special Improvement District and, most recently, helped spearhead its streetscape. She has left me with big shoes to fill, to say the least.”

As she assumes her new role, Orenstein is particularly excited about working with CFSID and the city of Cleveland Heights in the development, and ultimate completion, of the Top of the Hill Project.

“I am honored that the Board selected me for this position,” Orenstein stated. “What an exciting time to be involved with Cedar Fairmount! The evolution of this project will mark a new chapter for Cedar Fairmount and the city of Cleveland Heights.”



Myra Orenstein

“My children attended Rox El, Rox Middle and Heights High. So I am no stranger to the district. It’s my backyard! Helping to give back to my neighborhood makes this position very special,” Orenstein added.

A resident of Cleveland Heights for more than 30 years, Orenstein is the executive director of Cleveland Independents, the largest group of locally owned, independent restaurants in the country. She is also president of CATV, a marketing and public relations collaborative, and is a past executive director of Coventry Village SID.

Brendan Ring is treasurer of CFSID, and owner of Nighttown.

Mouriño joins Cedar Fairmount clinic

Kaye Lowe

Dr. Laura Mouriño has joined the Options Naturopathic Clinic practice of Erin Holston Singh, N.D., in the Cedar Fairmount Business District’s Heights Medical Building.

As naturopathic doctors, both Mouriño and Holston seek to support individuals in their journey to optimal health through natural means, and stress the important connections between social issues, environmental concerns and human health.

A graduate of the National University of Natural Medicine (formerly the National College of Natural Medicine), Mouriño attributes her pursuit of this field of medicine to her “complex medical history as a child.”

“After the removal of a benign brain tumor,” Mouriño explained, “my mother’s family used ‘folk medicine,’ along with conventional medicine, to assist in my recovery. The herbs and natural ingredients used allowed me to heal faster, and without scars.” Mouriño became interested in good food, and the medical aspects of healing with naturopathic methods.

At the university, Mouriño took two years of basic science courses, including anatomy, biochemistry and pathology—the same as required for medical doctors. Two years of clinical sciences and clinical rotations followed. After taking her clinical licensing exams, Mouriño chose to move to Cleveland Heights from Portland, Ore., to join Holston Singh’s practice.



Laura Mouriño

“Having had difficulty managing as the solo N.D. in Cleveland Heights,” said Holston Singh, “I am thrilled to welcome another naturopathic physician to our practice. Laura embodies the heart and soul of naturopathic medicine from the inside out; we are so grateful for her having come to Ohio.”

Trained as a primary care physician, Mouriño seeks to provide effective, sustainable, and “least harmful” natural health care options. She performs minor surgeries, such as stitching wounds and removing abscesses, and can recommend other conventional and naturopathic treatments.

She offers a free 10-minute consult in her office or on the phone for both English and Spanish speakers.

For additional information, visit www.optionsnaturopathic.com. or call 216-707-9137.

Kaye Lowe is recently retired as executive director of CFSID.

Ring names Lynch partner in Nighttown

Kaye Lowe

Brendan Ring, owner of Nighttown, has made event manager Melissa Lynch a partner in the iconic, long-lived restaurant and music club. In making the announcement, Ring quoted Nighttown’s former owner John Barr, who said, “It took me 27 years to find a partner in Brendan.” For his part, Ring said, “It took me only 25 years to find Melissa.”

“I am extremely honored to be able to be part of this amazing restaurant and to be working with such a wonderful team and, of course, Brendan Ring,” said Lynch. “I am excited to work with our guests and staff.”

Her goals are to work closely with Ring, to bring Nighttown’s everyday costs down and increase traffic into the restaurant. The partners plan to offer fresh new food items, while keeping the entrees that their regular customers love. Lynch anticipates that small changes in décor will be made, but the familiar Nighttown atmosphere will remain.

A resident of Cleveland Heights, Melissa Lynch, née Bodamer, grew up in Lakewood. She met her husband, Daniel Lynch, while on vacation and married him in 1997. They lived in Biloxi, Miss., until Daniel retired from the U.S. Air Force, after serving for 20 years. They then moved to Cincinnati, and eventually Cleveland Heights.

Lynch has six stepchildren and



Melissa Lynch, Partner of Brendan Ring, owner of Nighttown.

eight grandchildren, and says of them, “They taught me patience, which has helped my restaurant career.”


The Lynches moved to Cleveland Heights to be closer to Melissa’s brother, Dominic Bodamer, a detective with the Cleveland Heights Police Department. When she was looking for a job, Bodamer introduced her to Ring, and she began work at Nighttown as a server. When the position of event coordinator became available, Lynch interviewed and was hired.

“I was nervous coming to a new city and working for an independent restaurant,” Lynch recalled, “but it ended up being the best decision I

ever made.”

Lynch credits her first job, as a restaurant server at the age of 16, with starting her career in the restaurant business. Before Nighttown, Lynch held management positions at Ruby Tuesday and TGIFridays restaurants, and opened new restaurants for both companies. She has worked as a kitchen manager, assistant manager and general manager, and cites her experience in the world of corporate restaurants with teaching her how to budget and cut everyday costs.

Kaye Lowe is recently retired as executive director of CFSID.



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Heights Observer February 1, 2019

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#MeToo manifesto now on stage at Dobama

Colin Anderson

Dobama Theatre continues its season with the Cleveland premiere of “Revolt. She Said. Revolt Again.”—a theatrical manifesto for the #MeToo era. Written by Alice Birch, and directed by Sarah Elizabeth Wansley, the play runs through Feb. 17.

A wildly experimental and inventive grouping of vignettes, “Revolt” asks how to revolutionize language, relationships, work and life while bursting at the seams of conformity. An ensemble of four powerful women and one token male bring this unapologetically provocative, in-your-face text to life—with humor, strength, and a punk-rock attitude that refuses to behave.

“Revolt” was commissioned in 2014 as part of a series for the Royal Shakespeare Company. The series, *Midsummer Mischief*, highlighted the creativity of four female playwrights, Timberlake Wertenbaker, E.V. Crowe, Alice Birch and Abi Zakarian, who all worked from the same prompt: “Well-behaved women seldom make history.” The quote, taken from a 1976 article by



COURTESY DOBAMA THEATRE

Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, has become a cultural phenomenon and a well-loved slogan of the feminist movement.

Birch was irritated by Ulrich’s statement, attributing her anger to her confusion with the quote’s sentiment. She dove headfirst into feminist literature, including work by Kat Banyard, Caitlin Moran, and Andrea Dworkin, as inspiration for her play. The work that most shaped “Revolt” was *The SCUM Manifesto* by Valeria Solanas, who attempted to kill Andy Warhol in 1968. While Birch is clear that she doesn’t agree with the message of Solanas’ work, it inspired her to think of “Revolt” as a manifesto.

The play calls out the pervasiveness of sexual harassment and assault.

Throughout its four acts, it picks apart gender roles and stereotypes that have seeped into our collective consciousness. The characters work to upset these expectations and revolutionize their lives in the process.

“Revolt. She Said. Revolt Again.” challenges the audience to confront how a history of discrimination impacts us.

In its review, *The New York Times* said, “Ms. Birch’s work finds the theatrical exhilaration in civil disobedience.”

Birch wrote the play in three days. Asked about the process in an interview with *The New York Times*, she said, “Most things that I write do tend to come out like that, which is why there’s always so much fury. It feels like a need to say these things

now.”

“Revolt. She Said. Revolt Again.” debuted with the Royal Shakespeare Company in the summer of 2014, and had its American premiere at Soho Repertory Theatre in 2016.

Dobama’s production of “Revolt” features Nina Domingue, Lisa Louise Langford, Rachel Lee Kolis, Miranda LeeAnn and Abraham McNeil Adams.

Performances are Thursdays, at 7:30 p.m.; Fridays and Saturdays, at 8 p.m.; and Sundays, at 2:30 p.m. Tickets are \$29 to \$35, with senior, student and military discounts available.

To purchase tickets online, or for information on purchasing tickets at the box office, visit www.dobama.org, or call 216-932-3396.

Colin Anderson is the assistant to the managing and artistic directors of Dobama Theatre.

Cain Park art festival applications due March 1

Ksenia Roshchakovsky

The 2019 Cain Park Arts Festival, July 12–14, is accepting online artist applications through www.zapplication.org. The application deadline is March 1.

Now in its 42nd year, this juried fine arts and crafts event features the work of artists from across the country, working in painting, photography, prints, jewelry, ceramics, glass, leather, sculpture, wood and other materials.

This all-ages and family-friendly festival will be open Friday, July 12, 3–8 p.m.; Saturday, July 13, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; and Sunday, July 14, noon to 5 p.m. Admission is free on Friday, and \$5 per person on Saturday and Sunday (with children 12 and younger admitted for free).

Sunshine Artist, an art and craft show magazine, named Cain Park Arts Festival to its annual list of the top 200 fine art and design shows in 2017 and 2018.

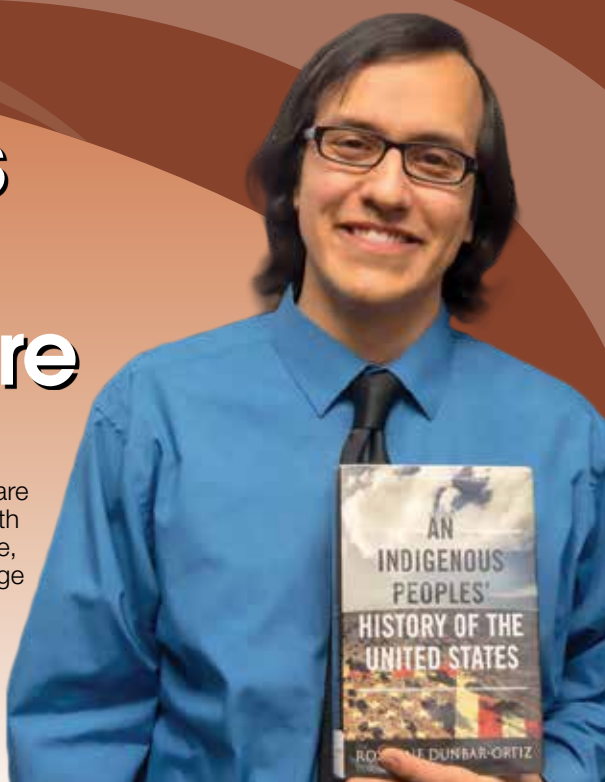
The artist application fee is \$40. The booth fee for accepted artists is \$450.

Ksenia Roshchakovsky is the p.r./marketing manager for Cain Park.

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— Josh Hunt



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— Shahada Raheem



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Forest Hill Church celebrates 'An Evening of Wonder'

Peg Weissbrod

This year's celebration of Black History Month at Forest Hill Church—An Evening of Wonder—will honor the music of Motown legend Stevie Wonder on Sunday, Feb. 10. Preceded by a community soul food dinner at 5:30 p.m., the musical performances will begin at 7 p.m.

The community meal and concert are free and open to the public.

The church's Black History Month committee chose to celebrate Wonder in recognition of his phenomenal musical career and the significant contributions his music has made in elevating the position of black musicians throughout society, as well as the lasting impact of his songbook on modern American history. The evening will highlight many of Wonder's most memorable and socially impactful songs over the past 50 years.

Featuring local band Alexander



Caleb A. Wright

Wright & The Collective, with Caleb A. Wright as lead vocalist, the concert will be under the musical direction of Tri-C jazz instructor, pianist and arranger Reginald Bowens. Wright has been coordinating

the musical programming for Black History Month at the church for the past five years.

The Collective comprises musicians from Cleveland State University, Cuyahoga Community College's Jazz Department, and Kent State University. Local musician Robin Blake, of The Robin Blake Sound Experiment, will be the saxophonist and musical arranger for the horn section, which features saxophonist Joe Kardos and trumpeter Jabril Barnes. Other featured musicians will be Joshua Stone, Joseph Rangel, Charise Grimes,

Deion Williams, Mark Butto and Jarred Goldwebber.

The concert will also include dance by Cleveland native and choreographer Rashawn Kadeem, and poetry by Cleveland spoken-word artist Tierra Khali. Co-pastors John Lentz and Veronica Goins will end the evening with a message on love, life and music.

Forest Hill Church is located at 3031 Monticello Blvd.

Peg Weissbrod is a freelance writer and publicity coordinator for Forest Hill Church in Cleveland Heights.

Bridging mediums to further the arts

Laura King

The new-music ensemble No Exit will perform at Heights Arts, 2175 Lee Road, on Friday, Feb. 15 at 7 p.m. In recent years, No Exit has appeared frequently at the gallery, so it can be easy to forget that two decades ago neither organization existed.

In 1999, participants in a Cleveland Heights civic visioning process identified the potential of the arts to positively impact the community. Soon after, the nonprofit Heights Arts was formed by a group of residents intent on tapping that resource. Two decades later, strategic collaborations, such as the one between Heights Arts and No Exit, have enhanced the regional arts scene and invigorated the community.

When Heights Arts Executive Director Rachel Bernstein, a classical cellist and teacher, succeeded founding director Peggy Spaeth in 2013, she envisioned that the newly expanded gallery space could become a known destination for both visual art and music. Bernstein recognized that having a grand piano permanently on-site would help that cause, and the gallery soon acquired one with the assistance of a generous benefactor and No Exit pianist Nicholas Underhill. With the piano as a practical and symbolic bridge between the visual arts and music, a close working relationship blossomed between Heights Arts and No Exit, grounded in a shared philosophy of making art accessible to everyone.

"Our collaboration with No Exit and its musicians has grown over the past years into a friendship between like-minded people with very similar missions," said Bernstein. "We all together strive to make the arts freely accessible to the community and to offer high-quality programming featuring local artists. No Exit helps

us fulfill a mission to bring different types of music to the public—in this case, challenging the status quo about what classical music is. Our partnering is perfect, as a No Exit concert at Height Arts draws in new audiences and provides a stimulating, satisfying experience for all."

No Exit Artistic Director Timothy Beyer affirms the benefits of the symbiotic relationship: "Partnerships like the one that has developed between No Exit and Heights Arts are foundational for a vital arts community to really thrive. In a typical classical music concert hall, there is always a barrier of space, of formality, of distance. The casual and intimate setting of Heights Arts does away with that stuffiness and allows listeners to connect fully. They experience the musicians and the avant-garde musical performance viscerally and on a very personal level. As a result, with each concert we hold at Heights Arts, our audience keeps growing, diversifying and becoming more engaged. We are extremely grateful that we share with Heights Arts a philosophy and dedication to making high-quality meaningful art accessible to the general public."

No Exit's Feb. 15 concert at Heights Arts is titled Cleveland Composers Series II, and will feature five world-premiere works by local composers Keith Fitch, Buck McDaniel, Christopher Auerbach-Brown, Nasim Khourassani, and Greg D'Alessio. All compositions are new and were commissioned by No Exit.

As with all No Exit performances, the concert is free, friendly, and open to the public.

Laura King provides administrative services to support Cleveland Heights' No Exit.

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Have an 'Ekphrastic' Valentine's Day at Heights Arts

Genevieve Schwartz

Art, poetry and music warm Heights Arts this February. Valentine's Day weekend starts with a free artist talk and poetry event followed the next day by a music performance, both in the nonprofit's gallery on Lee Road.

On Thursday, Feb. 14, at 7 p.m., Heights Arts offers a free artist talk and poetry event focusing on the work of the artists participating in the current exhibition, *VIEWpoints*. A series of gallery talks, Ekphrastic: Artists Talk + Poets Respond, offers an opportunity for exhibition artists to share insights on their work.

"Ekphrasis" means that one form of art is used to describe a completely

different form of art in order to illuminate an idea or help an audience understand the spirit of the work. The Poetry Foundation defines an ekphrastic poem as "a vivid description of a scene or, more commonly, a work of art. Through the imaginative act of narrating and reflecting on the 'action' of a painting or sculpture, the poet may amplify and expand its meaning."

Heights Arts explores this idea on the fourth Thursday of each of its group exhibitions.

The public is invited to hear the exhibition's artists, G.M. Donley, Michael Loderstedt, Wendy Partridge, Sai Sinbondit and Rebekah Wilhelm, speak about their process and intentional reads of the work. Cleveland



Field Note #08 Citizens & Borders, by Sai Sinbondit.

Heights Poet Laureate Damien McClendon, and invited poets Raja Freeman, Quartez Harris and Kai Flowers

follow, sharing their poetic responses to the corresponding works.

The following evening, Feb. 15, at 7 p.m., the public is invited to join No Exit New Music Ensemble for an intimate evening of music as it performs the second part of its spotlight on Cleveland composers with world-premiere works by Greg D'Alessio, Keith Fitch, Chris Auerbach Brown, Buck McDaniel and Nasim Khorasani.

For more information on upcoming events and other community arts offerings, visit www.heightsarts.org or call 216-371-3457.

Genevieve Schwartz is the program manager at Heights Arts.

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Kids tell their stories at Lake Erie Ink

Sarah Kloos

Early childhood educator Vivian Gussin Paley wrote that "we learn to know what we are thinking about by the ways in which we play." Dramatic play and storytelling are important to children as they learn to make sense of the world and work with one another.

Lake Erie Ink, a nonprofit organization based at the Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Campus, states the belief that creative writing is not only for kids and teens who already love writing, but also for those who have something to say, and feel that no one is listening.

Part of Lake Erie Ink's mission is to provide opportunities for children to tell stories.

While students were on break from school over the winter holi-

days, Lake Erie Ink was buzzing with creativity during its Hot/Cold Creative Play Days. Afternoons of outdoor play, creative writing and art fired up the kids' love of learning. Skits were written and performed, snowmen and penguins were created, and many new friendships were formed.

At Lake Erie Ink, the learning continues even when school is out.

Lake Erie Ink will provide additional opportunities for creative learning during the summer, and summer camp registration opens on Feb. 2. Visit www.lakeerieink.org for more information.

Sarah Kloos recently graduated from Hobart and William Smith Colleges with a bachelor's degree in English. She currently lives and works in Cleveland Heights.

Ensemble looks ahead to a busy spring

Tyler Whidden

Ensemble Theatre, in its 39th season, is poised to deliver an array of theater options in the coming months. The American classic "A Raisin in the Sun" runs through Feb. 17, and Ensemble will next bring Eugene O'Neill's "A Moon for the Misbegotten" to its Cleveland Heights theater in March. Directed by Ian Wolfgang Hinz, "Moon" follows the events of O'Neill's seminal "A Long Day's Journey into Night."

In addition to its stated mission of bringing "contemporary American classics" to the stage, Ensemble has also been at the forefront of Cleveland's new play development scene with the 2009 establishment of StageWrights, a weekly open-door workshop at which playwrights of all levels of experience meet and read new work.

Over the course of the past decade, StageWrights has provided Ensemble with new plays from Cleveland playwrights, including Cynthia Dettlebach, Rannigan Walsh, Barbara Harkness, Ed Walsh

and Tom Frattare.

This year, Ensemble's annual Colombi New Plays Festival will feature even more new works from local writers, including a full production of Cleveland playwright David Hansen's new play, "The Way I Danced With You," March 21 through April 7.

"There will be talkbacks, writing workshops and free play readings, open mics, poetry slams, and other events," said Executive Director Celeste Cosentino about the coming months at Ensemble. "It's all part of our 'What Happens to a Dream Deferred' Project, supported by Cuyahoga Arts & Culture and the Paul M. Angell Family Foundation."

Many of these events will surround the current production of "A Raisin in the Sun." Supplemental events are free to the public.

For a full schedule of events, visit www.ensembletheatrecl.org, or call 216-321-2930.

Tyler Whidden is a playwright, director and actor with Ensemble Theatre.

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SONGS AND
STORIES

Before the advent of streetcars—in this area that was in the 1910s—people had to live close to where they worked. And anything else you might want to do had to be within walking distance, too. That’s why there are so many churches everywhere around here. And there were more bars than churches, but the churches lasted because they’re a lot bigger, better constructed, more expensive to replace, and harder to convert into coffee shops and clothing stores (though at least one old Cleveland Heights church has been converted to condominiums).

The area that is now Cleveland Heights was mostly farms and quarries in the early 1800s, with only about 2,000 residents. By the time the streetcars came in, about 100 years later, there were 5,000 people living here. But streetcars enabled people from Cleveland to get up the big hills, on what are now Cedar and Mayfield roads, and population started increasing. Especially when developers promoted the western end of the area to wealthy Clevelanders as the place to build their big mansions.

The same thing was happening in

Lakewood, too. Cleveland’s streetcar lines were extended into Cleveland Heights and Lakewood, the first villages to the east and west of Cleveland. With population growth, these villages became cities in the early 1920s.

Besides the rich people coming into Cleveland Heights, much of Cleveland’s Jewish community moved here, too, centering around Coventry Road. My father’s family moved here in the early 1920s, to the Coventry area.

I’m just old enough that I can remember the end of the Old World—when the commercial strip of Coventry Road was home to Jewish bakeries, meat markets, fish markets, delicatessens and restaurants, and all the little old Jewish men and women (who were probably around the age I am now, which was much older back then—not just to me, because I was young, but because it really was older than it is today) walking in and out of all those shops, filling their cloth bags with goods, and standing on the street conversing in Russian, Polish, German and Yiddish.

That changed in the 1960s. Many Jews took off for points east, like Beachwood. Houses in my old neighborhood became rental properties for the first time, and students and other young transients moved in. Coventry became a haven

for hippies, like me. It was still a neighborhood, just a different neighborhood.

Then in the mid-’70s, it all changed again. The older Jewish people, who still owned the houses they had been renting out, now began selling those properties, mostly to African Americans, who finally found housing they could afford, and were not blocked from buying and living in, outside of the inner city.

Today, that neighborhood, like most of the rest of Cleveland Heights, is an indefinable mélange of cultures, races and lifestyles. It is what we like to call diverse.

Cleveland Heights embraced the concept of diversity. It took the subject seriously enough to make it official policy. Its mission statement says: “Cleveland Heights proudly connects with its history as a first suburb of Cleveland and as a mature, integrated, residential community.” For more than 40 years, the city has hosted and nurtured several groups and programs whose goals include bringing people and neighborhoods together, encouraging and helping people representing minorities of every kind to purchase homes here, and facilitating dialogue among diverse groups.

When I’m in places like the Home Depot, I marvel at the mix of people—Orthodox Jews and Arabs, whites and blacks—all shopping and working together.

The city has also embraced the

arts and artists of every kind. Its motto is “Home to the Arts.” And, for instance, Cain Park seeks to book musical artists that will bring in diverse audiences.

The neighborhood where I was born and raised, while it represented a minority culture, was not actually diverse then. It was fairly homogenous. It was an ethnic neighborhood that looked and felt like it had been there forever and would stay that way forever. Looking back, it’s easy to see now that it hadn’t and, of course, it didn’t. But after decades of evolving from one type of neighborhood to another, it did gather in enough influences to really become a diverse community.

My grandparents and their contemporaries probably would not like all this diversity. But most of their offspring, my parents’ generation, did come to appreciate it. And most of their offspring are more comfortable with it. My generation’s children never thought much about it. And their children don’t think at all about whether or not this is a diverse community; it’s just normal to them. And that’s where we were headed all along.

David Budin is a freelance writer for national and local publications, the former editor of Cleveland Magazine and Northern Ohio Live, an author, and a professional musician and comedian. His writing focuses on the arts and, especially, pop-music history.

FutureHeights

Best New Restaurant or Bar

Best New Business (other)

Best Place to Find Unique Gifts

Best Heights Vibe

Best Place to Take an Out-of-Towner

Best Place to Work

Best Bang for Your Buck

Best Customer Bathroom

Best Interior Style

Best Exterior Style

Best University Heights Business

Best Cleveland Heights Business



Bonus Question:

What New Businesses Would You Like to See in the Heights? (Let us know if you have a specific neighborhood or building where you would like to see this business located.)

Vote for your favorite Heights businesses!

Write in the names of your favorite Heights businesses or visit www.futureheights.org to complete the online ballot.

Deadline for ballot submission:
February 15, 2019

Please Note!

Although this is a write-in ballot, we are only considering businesses that are located within the city boundaries of Cleveland Heights and University Heights.

One ballot per person.

In order for your ballot to be counted, you must vote for at least half (6) of the ballot categories and include your name and contact information. Ballots not meeting these requirements will be considered invalid.

Mail your ballot to:

FutureHeights
2843 Washington Blvd. #105
Cleveland Heights, OH 44118

Or scan and e-mail your ballot to:
info@futureheights.org

Questions? Call 216-320-1423

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

If you are a business owner or operator, name of business: _____